

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

DIVISION OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

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January 11, 2008

Mayor, City of Ketchikan
334 Front Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mayor Weinstein:

Thank you for your email sent Tuesday, January 8 concerning the draft Statewide Long Range Transportation Policy Plan. You asked for an extension of the comment period and for a public hearing in Ketchikan.

We will extend the comment period to 4:30 pm AST Monday January 21, 2008 in order to allow additional opportunity for public comment.

As our plan website expresses, DOT&PF are available to provide short presentations and answer questions about the plan. Should you desire, we can support a teleconference sometime in the next week. We will send you the powerpoint presentation, and narrate the presentation and respond to questions by phone. Eric will contact you directly to arrange this presentation at your choice of date and time.

It is important to recognize that federal approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and amendments thereto is directly related to final approval of a Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan that meets the regulatory requirements of SAFETEA-LU. We have a major amendment to the STIP pending that also requires a lengthy public review process. Unnecessarily prolonging approval of this plan thus has negative impacts on project delivery which would be felt throughout the state and further risks the complete loss of these funds.

The Statewide Long Range Transportation Policy Plan is a policy document that primarily addresses issues of overall transportation funding for the state. It does not supplant regional transportation plans; rather it addresses the funding issues that are currently lengthening implementation of plans and delaying projects. Its focus is system-level, not project-specific. Its focus is on meeting the need that has been expressed but is not being achieved. Expressing additional need is an understandable desire, but it gets us no closer to surmounting the funding dilemma. That is the challenge before us which the plan seeks to convey.

Sincerely,

FAXED
1/11/08


Jeffrey C. Ottesen
Director

"Providing for the movement of people and goods and the delivery of state services."